



## **Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission**

### **March 27, 2012**

### **Meeting Notes**

#### **I. Welcome – Mayor Greg Fischer**

Mayor Fischer welcomed the group and briefly described the impetus for creating the Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission (hereinafter, “the Commission”); mentioning specifically the Festival of Faiths’ Sacred Air event last fall. The Mayor explained the composition of the Commission, noting the importance of geographic diversity in the representation as well as subject-matter expertise. The Commission is comprised of representatives from each state senate district as well as four at-large members. The Commission members have been given staggered terms of 1, 2 or 3 years. Additionally, a Metro Council representative, the Director of Economic Development, and four ex-officio non-voting members representing specific city departments sit on the Commission. The Commission will also have a Technical Advisory Committee, which will be co-chaired by Peter Barber and Mike Hayman. The Mayor introduced the Commission co-chairs, Katy Schneider and Henry Heuser, Jr, who was unable to attend.

Mayor Fischer outlined the Commission’s duties, which include advising the Mayor’s office on issues related to Louisville’s tree canopy; making recommendations for the selection and placement of trees; educating the community on the benefits of trees and how to plant, remove, and maintain trees; advocating for renewal of the city’s tree canopy; fund-raising to support tree-related projects; and developing and maintaining a tree canopy inventory.

Mayor Fischer turned the meeting over to Co-Chair Katy Schneider.

#### **II. Overview – Katy Schneider**

Co-Chair Schneider deferred her comments, asking instead to proceed with introductions of the members.

#### **III. Introductions of Members**

Each member introduced themselves and spoke briefly about their interest in serving on the Commission. Others in attendance included Marty Storch, Chris Poynter, Mike Hayman, Peter Barber, John Hamilton, and Lauren Hunter.

#### **IV. “What is a tree board?”**

Peter Barber, Urban and Community Forester with the Kentucky Division of Forestry, spoke to the about the role of a “tree board” within a community and some of their common tasks, notably

community outreach and education. Much of the Commission's work will be done at the committee level.

Mr. Barber noted that this was Louisville's 11<sup>th</sup> year as a Tree City USA designee and that there are tremendous tree resources in Louisville. As a representative of the Division of Forestry, Mr. Barber pledged to support the Commission's work in whatever way possible, but noted that the Division has suffered significant budget cuts itself and may not have financial resources to contribute.

Mr. Barber pointed out some information resources available to Commission members that will be helpful to them in understanding their role and the administration of tree boards. In particular, Mr. Barber suggested that members visit <http://treeboardu.org/>, a training course developed by the USDA Forestry Division and the Arbor Day Foundation. There were also some "swag" bags brought by Mr. Barber that included a sheet of internet resources (attached).

Commission member Stephen Cotton asked Mr. Barber if the Commission's activities should include other types of plants, such as shrubs, grasses, and flowers. Mr. Barber replied that from a forest management perspective everything east of the Mississippi River, if left to its natural state, is forest. Therefore, managing plants, even lawns, is all "urban forestry" as leaving green space unmanaged, for even a single growing season, will result in a progression toward a forested state.

## **V. Adjourn**

Before adjourning, Co-Chair Schneider reviewed the materials provided to the Commission members, including the Urban Forest Task Force Report (1994), the Community of Trees Action Plan (2007), and the Urban Tree Canopy Plan developed by students in UofL's MUP and JD degree programs (Plan available online at <http://www.jefferson.kyschools.us/projects/greencity/UrbanTreeCanopyPlan.pdf>).

Co-Chair Schneider reviewed the committees and asked all Commission members to participate in at least one. The committees are each co-chaired by a Commission member and another member of the public and are staffed by an ex-officio representative or other member of their department.

The floor was opened for any additional questions. Commission member Katie Greene asked if Mr. Barber or Commission member Monica Orr could describe how they got the community involved in the Cherokee Triangle Association's Tree Committee's efforts. Ms. Orr cited several circumstances (including an ice storm, a wind storm, and power line trimming practices) that came together to bring the issue of tree preservation to a head in the neighborhood, which values its established tree canopy. Early successes included the support of the Landmark Commission by creating a requirement for homeowners to get permission to remove front yard trees in the Triangle. Ms. Orr also recognized the valuable expertise brought to the group by Mr. Barber and Margaret Carreiro, Associate Professor of Biology at UofL and an expert in the field of urban landscapes.

Co-Chair Schneider announced that the next Commission meeting would take place April 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 and would be held in the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District Boardroom at 850 Barret Ave. This meeting would include a presentation of the Urban Tree Canopy Report, which Commission members were encouraged to review prior to the meeting. Subsequent meetings on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and July 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 were also announced. A discussion of potential meeting locations included an offer from Marty Storch, Assistant Director of Operations with Metro Parks, to use various parks locations throughout the city for future meetings.

Finally, Co-Chair Schneider suggested that, if possible, each Commission member attend the 4/20/12 Arbor Day Festival at 10am in Shawnee Park to participate and to be more visible in the community.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10